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## Sharing Research on Optimal Child Development Techniques

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## SHARING RESEARCH ON OPTIMAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES

May 4, 2012 by cpehrson

At Utah State University's Sunrise Sessions, faculty and students share their research with USU alumni, community and business leaders and the public from the Salt Lake area. Held quarterly in downtown Salt Lake City, these early-morning presentations inform listeners about world-leading research in diverse fields.

On June 8th, at the Little America Hotel, 500 South Main Street Salt Lake City, the CPD's own Vonda Jump will be presenting her research on "Optimal Child Development." Her presentation begins at 7:30 a.m.



Dr. Jump has spent years investigating how critical early positive interactions with infants and young children is in creating optimal brain development, particularly in alternative caregiving environments, such as foster care or orphanages. She has traveled extensively in Ecuador, Haiti, India, and Russia, training orphanage caregivers about the importance of providing positive early interactions with the young children there.

Their stories break your heart. Babies abandoned because they are the wrong gender. Toddlers given away when another new mouth comes into the family. Infants struggling to survive after they've lost both parents. "We can't change their stories, but we can give them hope and a fighting chance," says Vonda Jump, senior research associate at the Center for Persons with Disabilities' Research and Evaluation Division. It is her belief in that notion that has led her to create and teach relationship-based intervention programs, including infant massage, in orphanages in some of the world's neediest countries.

At the Sunrise Session, Jump will be talking about specific types of interactions that promote brain development in infants, such as talking, touching, showing them toys/objects. According to her research, it takes only simple interactions to make a positive difference in the brain development of infants and young children.